1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

holding this title had very few of these offices left—they were now the rights of persons holding quite different titles.

The economy of Bornu was a semi-specialized one. Almost everyone grew some crops, except a few cattle nomads, but at the same time during the long dry season people carried on craftwork, trade, and other specialized activities, such as providing medical or barbering services, or entertainment for those who were willing to pay. Everyone had access to new land, over which a person might establish ownership by his act of clearing it. If he used the land for only a few years, and stopped, then the land passed back into bush with no owner. Continued long-term use, especially that involving inheritance, meant that the owner could do with it what he pleased and transfer it to whomever he pleased. In other words the Kanuri had property concepts of usufruct or use-right, but they also had notions of freehold or private property in which land could be transferred by an individual after he had used it for a long time, or it had been passed on to his heirs.

The people raised specialized crops in the kingdom and practiced a myriad of different crafts. Each local craft was organized into a craft guild that helped set production and price standards under a local craft leader who benefited economically from his position and tried to pass it down through the male line. Markets, too, were under headmen and all goods to be traded went to weekly markets to which came thousands of people from the surrounding area.

Trade was accomplished by barter for the most part, although several forms of currency developed, which can be called special purpose or limited purpose money. For various kinds of trade, and within limits, certain objects—a man's robe, iron bars, slaves, horses, cotton rolls, Maria Theresa dollars, and other items—could be used. The trans-Saharan trader came to Bornu for slaves; he therefore demanded payment in slaves, and slaves became a kind of currency for this trade. People from Bornu traded south of Lake Chad for iron bars. These bars could be used to purchase anything in the markets southeast of Bornu where they were the chief export commodity. The same thing is true of cloth in the southern areas of Bornu where it was manufactured and where it was a major export item. Cloth rolls purchased any number of commodities from Bornu but only in that north-south trade. Cowrie shells came very late to Bornu (1820–1850) and never achieved the success as currency that they did elsewhere.

Another and important method of distribution of goods was carried out within the political system itself. Political superiors gave out enormous quantities of cloth, food, horses, and robes on particular holy days or special events such as rites of passage, or wrestling matches. On one occasion a witness in the early part of the century watched the Shehu give away more than a thousand men's robes and an equal number of bullocks and sheep. Although one would expect the leaders to give more than other men, they also served as a model for the population so that the amount of distribution actually carried on in this way must have been very great indeed.

Another important facet of the economy was foreign trade. Although the famous trans-Saharan caravans are supposed to have declined during the nineteenth century, by all accounts they were still of considerable importance for Bornu. Into Bornu came calico, cotton prints, fine silk, sword blades, writing paper, looking glasses, needles, razors, scissors, knives, cheap jewelry, and guns mostly from Eu-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

423 592 been told of many political leaders who rubber stamp decisions about land transfer, simply registering the fact and witnessing its legality. In some cases, however, there is interference, and it is generally discovered when this happens that there have been some previous difficulties in the owner's relationship to the political leader.

423 241 Farm plots are generally used for periods of four to eight years. Then they are allowed to lie fallow for about the same length of time. Everyone in the community knows a fallow field and its owner, and there would be trouble if someone tried to use one of these without the owner's permission. If fallow land is unused because the owner has moved away or has given up farming, then the land reverts to the common disposal of the community as a whole. The political leader 423 can then allot these lands to newcomers or other community members, although he would generally be careful to check claims on them by previous owners and their relatives before doing this.

In summary, from the point of view of the people themselves, there are four different kinds of land around a Kanuri village. First, there is land owned outright by the household head over which he has complete authority. Secondly, there is land that has been cleared by a household head or that he was given the right to use by his local leader and which may become totally his or that of his heirs after long years of use and/or inheritance. Thirdly there is resting land, which is a farm plot that has been in use but whose depleted soil the owner will likely use again. If he moves away without trying to dispense with any of these plots then they revert to free land. Finally, there is free unused land around the settlement that can be used for newcomers or those trying to expand their holdings. [428] As far as ownership is concerned, about sixty percent of all land in Magumeri was obtained through inheritance. The remaining forty percent was almost all new land cleared outside the present circumference of farm plots in which the plots had been registered with the village head whose permission had been granted. The important thing to remember about this system is that it works. Litigation over land in [691] Magumeri had to do mostly with what we call "trespassing." People were brought to the courts because they (usually their livestock) had infringed on someone's right to land. There was very little difficulty in general over transfers. People knew what rights were held and how they could transfer these rights to others.

463 [241] [221] Except for the few farmers who produce either specialized crops like yams or tobacco and then market them, most Kanuri have a dry season occupation such as craftwork, trade, or a service occupation such as native doctoring or barbering. These they view as an occupation, while farming, unless it is the only specialty carried out, is viewed as an important side line. As we have seen in the chapter on the life cycle, recruitment into an occupation is carried on by an apprenticeship system within the household organization. This is even the case for some western types of occupation such as truck driving, and it only recedes in importance when western type schooling is involved.

463 467 [622] [178] Traditionally, occupations in Bornu have been organized under head men in each settlement and under an overall head man for the entire occupation who lived in the capital city. Today the traditional occupations such as blacksmith, leather worker, butcher, and so on still have such an organization, although the privileges and duties of a head man are very few and do not extend beyond his local settlement. Nevertheless, men in Magumeri who are butchers, blacksmiths or dyers, and

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

so on, report that if they visit the capital of Maiduguri they often go to pay their respects to the Maiduguri head of their own occupation. People felt that rural heads of occupations should always do this, and everyone else should try to do it now and then. Local heads of occupations, no matter where they live, usually do have some privileges. Thus in larger villages and cities, the head butcher has one day a week, not market day, on which his meat alone is sold in villages. In Magumeri the head butcher receives a small commission on all hides and skins sold by the village's butchers.

Very often those in similar occupations live close to one another within a village, and some small hamlets are made up of people devoted almost exclusively to one craft activity. This reflects the fact that sons tend to settle in the vicinity of their fathers especially when they take up the same occupation. Since this is also true of many clients and apprentices, who are non-kin, it is often quite normal to see a hamlet or a ward of a larger village composed of people most of whom practice the same dry season activity.

In analytical terms almost all of Kanuri craft production is characterized by simple technology, cottage industry organization in the same household or a group of closely related households, and by its interrelations with regional and even international competition. Let us go over these points one by one.

Only the simplest tools are required to produce everything made in Bornu, and the materials for these can often be obtained locally. Methods of production are slow and laborious. For example, an ordinary blacksmith working at home, as they all do, can make from three to five hoes a day; or a dyer working over his dye vat can color five or six robes in a busy day with no disturbances. A potter makes from ten to twenty pots a week, depending upon the type of pots being turned out. Compared to the productivity of more industrialized workers in Africa itself or other parts of the world, such outputs are almost infinitesimal. Production itself is almost always carried on in small groups located inside the household of a craftworker. In this sense Bornu craft production is of the cottage industry type. Sometimes a group of craftsmen work together in their own ward of the town, especially when the group includes a number of agnatically related kinsmen among its members. This means that a craftsman spends his working hours at home or close by in a neighbor's household, and these neighbors are often close kin. In some special cases craft work is organized along some other lines. Thus the blind people, who often live together in a ward of their own, produce rope and then sell it in one section of the market. It is an occupation that can be practiced by the blind and affords them some means of livelihood in the community.

Unlike food production in which the Bornu area provides almost everything they require in the way of staples, Kanuri crafts have never been totally self-sufficient. Thus iron for blacksmiths, dyes for clothes, paper, textiles, or glass beads have always come from outside Bornu. Furthermore there has always been competition between locally manufactured articles and those from other parts of the Sudan. This works both ways so that Bornu knives are accepted and coveted items in many markets all over the Sudan, while leather work from Kano can be seen all over Bornu and is always in high demand. On a more local level in a small village like Magumeri, craftwork from other villages almost always finds its way into the local market to compete with items produced in Magumeri. Such openness means that

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The second category is the tradesmen. They depend less on a special craft ability than on their general skills in buying and selling at a profit. Through their knowledge of the operation of the economic system they assist in the distribution of goods, and earn their livelihood by taking for themselves a percentage of the value of goods which pass through their hands. The tradesmen and the craftsmen are two specialized groups within the social system of the town of Geidam whose activities are largely centered within the economic sphere of Kanuri culture. The third category of specialists typically found in an urban community are specialists in maintaining the bureaucracy, and though there is an economic component to their activities, these fall more properly within a consideration of the political organization, so that discussion of the role of this group of specialists will be deferred.

Table III lists the major types of craftsmen found in Geidam, and notes in addition whether they are organized under a single head, whether they are localized in one section of the town, and the extent of their participation in the market. The seventeen types of craftsmen listed in Table III are all full-time specialists. They are highly skilled at their craft, and no Geidam man would attempt to perform for himself the services, or to manufacture the products, which the craftsmen supply. Eight crafts in Geidam are each organized under a single head. The head of a craft group such as the barbers, or the butchers, is appointed by the Ajia of Geidam and is given a kulugu as a mark of office.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 138]

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Table III

Major Types of Craftsmen in Geidam

	organized with head	not organized	live localized	live dispersed	In market: works	In market: sells
Barber	*			*	*	*
Blacksmith	*			*	*	*
Bəji-maker		*	*			*
Butcher	*		*		*	*
Calabash decorator		*		*		*
Dyer	*		*			
Fishermen	*			*		
House builder		*		*		
Leather-worker		*		*	*	*
Potter		*	*			*
Praise-singer	*		*			
Səgdi-maker		*	*			*
Sewing machine operator	*			*	*	*
Shoemaker		*		*		*
Tanner	*		*			*
Well-digger		*	*			
Wood-worker		*		*	*	*

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463 His primary function is to adjudicate disputes between members
467 of his craft group. Some types of craftsmen are not represented in sufficient numbers in Geidam to warrant a head man. This is true, for example, of the house builders of Geidam, who are not organized under a head man, though in Maiduguri the house builders are so organized.

463 About half of the draftsmen live in neighborhoods where
467 that type of craft activity is localized. For some (butchers
621 and sagdi-makers), this is because their craft is linked to
[563] an ethnic group; for others it is because the physical practice
[476] of that craft demands the use of communal pits (tanners) or vats (dyers). Still others, however, cluster together in neighborhoods because of social factors which tend to bring them together so that they form an organized segment of the society; but many craftsmen live interspersed with other sorts of people throughout the town.

463 Most craftsmen are involved in the activities of the market-
443 place, where all those who deal with a product sell what they have made. Many also work in the market-place as well, and make their product to order for the waiting customer. Only the dyers, well-diggers, housebuilders, fishermen and praise-singers have no connection with the market. All of course also work outside of the market-place; in fact most of their work is done in the homes, where one can always go for any specialized aspect of their services.

463 Table IV lists a second category of craftsmen. These are

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 140]

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Table IV

Less Specialized Craftsmen in the Geidam Economy

	organized with head	not organized	live localized	live dispersed	In Market: works	sells
Beggars		*		*		
Charm sellers		*		*		*
Grooms		*		*		
Hair setters		*		*		
Hunters		*		*		
Transporters		*	*			
Water carriers		*	*			
Wood cutters		*	*			*

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463 distinguished from the first group of craftsmen included in Table III because of two factors: their craft requires less skill, and they are typically part-time specialists. As such, they fall mid-way between the craftsmen and the "talaka" of
463 Geidam who are not specialists at all. None of the less spe-
467 cialized craftsmen are organized under a head man. This is
493 because their skills are much less developed and because they have less to do with the market. The market itself is a highly organized institution, and most individuals who deal regularly in the market are organized into structured groups according to the type of activity in which they are engaged. As can be seen from Table IV, only the charm sellers and the wood cutters sell their products in the market; the remaining craftsmen sell their
[621] services directly in the town. Only the transporters, the wa-
[563] ter carriers, and the wood cutters live in localized neighborhoods, and the first two specialities are practiced by distinct ethnic groups.

3. Tradesmen.

463 The second major category of economic specialists in the
441 town of Geidam is that of the tradesmen. They too are typically urban specialists who make their living through the distribution of goods, and since the town of Geidam is an important center for the exchange and marketing of goods, many of the townspeople devote themselves entirely to trade. Most are engaged in the buying and selling of a single commodity or group of related

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441 those of the head of a group of craftsmen. Ten of the fourteen
441 types of tradesmen are organized under a head man. Of the four
443 types who are not so organized, three are not involved in activities in the market-place, which supports the view put forth above, that the structure of the market itself is reflected in the organization of groups whose activities center there.. Five types of tradesmen have nothing at all to do with the market-place, and three of these are not organized with a head.
441 But a second related factor can be seen operating as well.
177 This is particularly apparent when one compares the two sorts of "sundry" sellers. One, the fɔtkema, sells only traditional Kanuri goods. The other, the taborma, sells a variety of sorts of Western goods. Both sell in the market-place. The fɔtkema are organized under a head man; the taborma are not organized. It would appear that tradesmen who deal in goods imported from the Western world tend not to be organized as a group with their own head. Turning once again to the four types of tradesmen who are not organized, the taborma fall into this category, as do the canteen operators who are primarily engaged in trade with the European trading companies, and the peanut traders who buy up peanuts for sale to the trading companies.
[452] Money-lenders, the fourth unorganized type of tradesman, fall
[779] into a different category since they practice an illicit oc-
463 cupation, forbidden by Islamic law. The organization of groups
467 of urban specialists under a single head with quasi-political
441 authority to resolve disputes within the group would appear to
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463 be an element of traditional Kanuri culture. Most of these
467 specialists, craftsmen and tradesmen, are involved with the
441 market, an old Kanuri institution, but others are, and always
177 have been engaged in carrying on their trade outside of the
178 market. New types of craftsmen and tradesmen who are engaged in new sorts of activities which have been introduced into Kanuri culture as a result of contact with the Western world tend not to be organized compared to the older and more traditional groups in Kanuri society.

4. Local trade, and the market-place.

44 An attempt was made to tally the number of sellers on a
438 Geidam market day. Normally, the market is swarming with people at the height of market activity. This is particularly true in the dry season, in the months following the harvest.
[221] During October and November, when the harvest has been gathered
[491] and people can afford to buy things, and the roads are once again passable, the Geidam market reaches enormous proportions. The tally, however, was made over two market days in late August and early September. This is in the latter part of the rainy season, and the market is much smaller because of the difficulties in traveling at that time of the year, but it made it much easier to count the number of sellers present at one time. There were 1,477 sellers present in the market. People buying and the many others merely sitting around chatting or observing the scene were not included in the tally. There were prob-

463 829 crafts, that is to lump services such as native doctor with manufacturing such as pottery making. Recruitment into a craft is carried on 874 by an apprenticeship system. In return for learning the craft, the apprentice serves his senior and gives him some or all of his earnings 874 during the training period. New occupations such as carpenter or lorry 178 driver, which do not require literacy, have utilized the apprentice system of recruitment. On the other hand, in western jobs requiring literacy and other kinds of schooling the apprentice system is at a minimum.

467 Traditional craft workers in Bornu are organized by occupation under head men in each village area and each city. Today the Maiduguri head of a craft has the highest status of local craft heads in Bornu, but his few privileges hardly extend beyond the capital. Nevertheless, rural heads of crafts who visit Maiduguri should still render nona (pay their respects) to the Maiduguri head of their sanya (occupation). Informants everywhere agreed that not only local craft heads but all craft members should do the same, although this latter prescription seems to be more honoured in the breach. Local heads all over Bornu do, however, have some special privileges. Thus in the larger centres of Maiduguri, Geidam, Nguru, and Gashua, the head butcher has one day a week (not the traditional market day) on which his meat alone is sold. In Magumeri, the head butcher gets a small commission on all skins sold by Magumeri butchers to the hides and skins buyers.

433 438 The household group in Bornu cannot produce all the things it requires in its consumption patterns. The needs of a specialized and semi-specialized population are satisfied through the operation of a highly organized system of interlocking market cycles. This system is described in detail in the section on trade.

000 season.

Craft Production

• 467 621 The outline given at the beginning of the chapter has indicated the general organisation of crafts in Bornu. Each village having several of the same variety of craftsmen has a ward devoted to this craft under a headman. Thus Magumeri Village has a ward for butchers, dyers, potters, makers of millet beer, string makers, and calabash makers. [443] Goods produced by crafts not present in Magumeri are obtained through the market. 433 In analytical terms the Kanuri craft industry is characterized by its simple technology, its cottage industry social structure and its relation to outside competition.

Only the simplest tools are needed to produce almost everything made in Bornu and the materials for these can be obtained locally. Methods of production are slow and laborious. Thus a blacksmith makes about three to five hoes per day and a dyer colours only five or six robes on a busy day. Again a potter's weekly production runs from ten [177] to twenty pots, depending upon the size. The chief exceptions to this [294] are the Singer sewing machines, used universally by tailors to make [402] clothes, and the few milling machines used in Maiduguri.

438 Craft production is carried on in small groups and almost [602] always inside the household of the craft worker. Sometimes a group of craftsmen work together in their ward, especially when they are agnatic kinsmen. However, each owns the result of his own labour. A man's day in craft work is spent within the confines of his own household or closeby in the house of a neighbour who practises the same craft. Thus the locus of craft work, family life, and often male agnates are all the [294] same. In one exceptional case in Magumeri, a cloth seller has invested in three Singer sewing machines and has tada njima who tailor for others